

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE



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Seattle Restaurateur Charged with Sales Tax Theft, Filing False Tax Returns

SEATTLE, Wash., June 25, 2003 — The owner and operator of the popular Simpatico restaurants in Seattle and Kent was charged today with stealing more than \$123,000 in sales tax and filing false tax returns to cover the theft.

The Financial Crimes Unit of the Attorney General's Office charged Hugh P. Golden, 35, with two counts of Theft in the First Degree and two counts of Filing a False Tax Return with the Washington Department of Revenue. Each charge is subject to a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$20,000 fine.

According to the charges, Golden failed to file tax returns or filed "no business activity" returns with the Department of Revenue between 2000 and 2002, even though his businesses were active and collecting sales tax from customers. When contacted by a Department of Revenue agent, Golden told the agent that the Kent restaurant was closed. He also claimed that the Simpatico restaurant in the Wallingford District of Seattle was doing no business, even though it was one of the more popular restaurants in North Seattle at the time.

Golden's scheme unraveled when Revenue agents investigated and learned that he grossed more than \$1.3 million at the two restaurants over the past two years, but intentionally failed to pay the state the sales tax collected from his customers.

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